

Nicolas 0:00

My name is Nicholas Held. I'm currently in my second year studying Live Events and Television at University of London in the London College of Communication. I had a couple of ....I originally applied for film and television or film practice course, I was rejected because too many people applied. So I figured something that was close to what I originally applied, something that will still allow me to do I want when I'm older. So hence why I chose this course, two years ago.

Frank 0:34

My name is Frank William Fogarty. I'm also a second year BA Live Events and Television at UAL, LCC campus. The first time I properly applied to university after my after my A levels, I'd applied for history and politics and didn't get into the university that I wanted to. Also decided that I'd rather spend my time and money having a bit more fun. And I'd always loved film, and always loved photography, and I'd always loved London. So, I just looked at various different universities that offered a film course, I applied very, very late, which I don't recommend doing, especially for courses at UAL. And therefore, my application got shifted to Live Events and Television and was given a phone call by one of the course leaders, convinced me to come have an interview and ....and get the offer.

Academic Support 1:27

So maybe just start with some of your reflections once you heard you've got a place. What were the things you imagined, and then maybe what happened, in reality?

Nicolas 1:37

Well, initially, when I got the news, I was accepted to do this course, I would say, I was a little bit anxious at first, mainly from the live events standpoint, from the television standpoint, I was interested in it.

Frank 1:52

I was excited because I was told that there would be the ability to, you know, dip your fingers into lots of pies. So, I came more with the hope of being, you know, 'I want to be, I want to be a DoP I want to be a director' and I've found over.. over having to do certain other things, that's not where my strengths lie. And my process has shifted towards more producing and more of a creative writing career. Because I think we all come in with an idea of what we want. But then once you experience what at least our course has to offer, you realise there's so many other possibilities and so many different areas where your strengths could potentially lie.

Frank 2:35

With this university as a whole, although this is a college of communication, communication isn't in a sense of media, as such, it's person to person skills. Every single course, at this uni, more or less involves you having to work with other people. And that involves having to speak to people from different races, genders, creeds, sexualities, that you might not have experienced before in your school life. As this university is incredibly diverse and you get to meet a huge range of people that you'd probably wouldn't meet at other universities. And working with them is an absolute delight. Because it also allows you to bounce off each other's experiences from different countries. And also people have like varying different skill levels, when they start the course, which is even more so considering the number of mature students.

at this college. We've got, I think, two or three students over the age of 31, one over the age of 50. And it's all about being able to work with different people, otherwise, you can't really survive, you've got to be able to identify with other people's strengths and weaknesses as well as your own. You need person to person and people skills to survive in most of the industries that have been taught at this... at this university

Academic Support 3:58

What do you need to be people to collaborate and to work with people from so many different backgrounds?

Nicolas 4:04

I think as much as we might express where we're from... what we like, what we don't like, whatever... sometimes you don't really know somebody, sometimes they might have something with their personal life that they might need to deal with. I mean, there have been plenty of times I've worked on this course where people can't come for certain days to help me on a project because they've got something to deal with at home. It also teaches you how to adapt on the fly, as well as be aware that people do have lives outside of university. And it is important to sort of be sensitive to any issues that they may have, as well as, you know, show signs of independence.

Frank 4:39

You've got to have a certain level of empathy for other people, because everyone's in different situations at home, you know. Some people have jobs, or some people, you know, maybe carers or have got their own problems. So it is about adapting to that. And also a willingness to understand it's not about 'Okay, that person's isn't can't be here. So that person's out of my mind'. It's got to be 'okay, they're not here for this reason, which I understand I'd be the same if I had the same, the same problems, potentially as well.'

Academic Support 5:10

Do you feel you get to know each other quite well?

Nicolas 5:12

Yeah, I would say so. I mean, like honestly within the first week of actually going this university, I felt like you could name half the course. Yeah, like, instantly start bonding with people. You feel like you've seen them for, I want to say years, but like you feel like you, it's been more than a day that you've been hanging out .. intimate's not the right word, but it's not like ...if you do like a maths degree where there's like 200 people in the lecture theatre and you get to know like 10 max... it's more or less, you pretty much know everybody on a first name basis.

Frank 5:43

Yeah, I've got... I've got friends in other universities, and they don't... they might know one or two people from other courses ...with this being so collaborative and also the fact that everyone comes in at different skill level... you will go through like a second growing up together. And you really bond as well. Most of my friends, or my main friends, are my course mates. Whereas, you know, people in other universities, their main friends are the people that they live with, who they just live with, by chance on their moving day into halls. And especially me and Nick are both part of the sport at this university, which I thoroughly recommend, absolutely everybody to

join in on. I'm the president of the rugby team. And, you know, this is an arts university in that sense. That's to say, it's not your Exeter, it's not your Loughborough, we're not, we're not here to win...we're here just to play a bit of sport. You know, the football team have a writing on the back of their shirts, which says 'not bad for a bunch of blokes that likes fashion and drawing'. They're there to have a kick about. When it comes to the more serious event at the end of the year against another university, then we're there to win. But most of it is just playing sports, which we all love, and then going out for a drink. I don't do the going out bit because I don't drink. But that doesn't alienate you in any anyway at all. But the courses have a sense of family and the societies as well have a big sense of family as well.

Nicolas 7:08

Yeah, I was gonna to say bouncing off that, everyone is a student, everybody... everybody specialises in a certain thing. I know a lot of people from the football team that do like graphic design, for example. Being so close to them and asking for a favour also benefits you, in regards to a creative standpoint, not just from a personal and friendship standpoint.

Frank 7:26

Because all these people that you'll meet, you know you realise like one of them's a good editor, one of them's a good DoP, one of them's a good director, but then the wider you disperse your friendship group it is actually more industry links, as well as friends. Because everyone loves a friend but I'm not going to ask my friend to shoot film for me, who's doing philosophy and history, I'm going to ask my friend who's on my course or my friend on the film course. You know, people always say you need to know more people, you need to have more contacts. Well, at a university like this, all of your friends are contacts, because everybody is that talented and that invested in their art and craft, that it comes as one whole package. It's not. Okay, friends one time and then work later. It's all combined into one.

Academic Support 8:13

Can we move on and talk a bit more about studying here?

Nicolas 8:17

I guess my thoughts going into it was I wouldn't ... that wouldn't be too much theory. In my mind, I thought I don't know 75% practice 25% theory. But to be fair, I think I was clearly wrong in that standpoint, whether it's essays or reports or even... what was it... like?

Frank 8:37

Reflective? Yeah, reflected ...reflective essays. It seems to be very much like what have you learned? What went wrong? What have you learned from the experiences?

Frank 8:46

... Workbook, sorry.

Frank 8:47

Yeah, workbook, you've got to show your working out. And I'd come from a fairly academic essay, background, doing history, politics and economics. And therefore I

was concerned there'd be so many things that I would have to produce that weren't to my style. But with everyone being on different levels of education and understanding, especially the English language, with a lot of international students here, I found that if you keep up on top with all your work, you should never have a problem. The advice is that when you do a workbooks... we have a project over the whole term, the submissions right at the end, so you get to reflect on everything that's happened. The idea would be that you would do it as you go along. What tends to happen mostly is that we do it in the last two or three days. And we were trying to remember what happened, which is a good recollection process. And then we usually have a small reflective essay. When it comes to the more academic writing, some people struggle but there is a ton of support. And there's always someone to check. So, I know that the library and academic services are brilliant, especially for people with disabilities or learning... learning difficulties. You can easily get yourself a peer mentor. I'm a peer mentor for two students on my course and the year below me. It's usually widely available for everybody.

Academic Support 10:02  
What is a peer, peer mentor?

Frank 10:07  
It's just someone who has been on your course in a year or a year above. You're just there to give them a bit of guidance, whether it's with work or just adjusting to uni life, just helping them out. And it is a ...it's a paid position, by the UAL services as well.

Academic Support 10:23  
Can you suggest some of the issues that you confront?

Frank 10:26  
The worries brought or least I have .... mostly everybody's in halls and the halls are dispersed all over London, as are this university's colleges. But if you find you're in a hall far away from your college, there's less likely to be students from your college or even your course there. I was fairly lucky, two of my course mates were in the same accommodation as me. So, we got to hang out and work together. But like all your fun happens when you're here. If you want to work with friends, work with them here. And then going back home is where you relax and where you get to have a bit of 'me time' a bit of downtime. And so that was one of the issues brought is the 'I've got nothing to do when I'm back home, apart from work'. I said 'well do the work here with people. Because I think this university is open till 10 o'clock each day. And the CSM library in Kings Cross is open 24 hours. So there's always like somewhere where you can go and work with your, with your friends and with your classmates'. And then also I suggested that person join a society. Because... it doesn't take up much time, but it keeps you occupied. There are all the temptations of everything else in this city. If you just focus on your work, you've got to stay with the people that are going to get you working as well.

Nicolas 11:45  
Um, I mean, in terms of like confidence, and maybe not feeling great mentally, you can always speak to some in the university. I guess maybe in regards to work, if you're struggling, don't feel great....like I said, I've had people who have worked on courses and haven't showed up to important days, even though they haven't said it,

you can still get a feeling they don't feel mentally well. It's more or less about communication. Communication does so much for this...for yourself, as well as your course mates as well as other people you may collaborate with.

Frank 12:20

It's always okay to say that you're not okay. Like you can tell when your friends when your course mates are visibly stressed. And they can tell when you're stressed as well. And the family aspect that this university offers is, there will always be someone to ask if you're okay, and to help if you need help. The Student Union's brilliant with it, and the student and social services are brilliant here, as well. And everybody, especially when they have to try new things. Like I never properly operated a TV camera before, I never vision mixed, I never directed. If there's not a lecturer, there's always ...not even someone who has done it as well but always someone will say, 'oh, no, you're doing well', or, 'you know, calm down, calm down'. I was nervous coming into this university because there's a whole different world of people. I went from like a sixth form where I was wearing business suits every day to here where you know, you can wear whatever you want. And there is the pressure of fashion, there's the pressure of fitting into the latest trends, which you can give into if you like, but here the ability to express yourself and to also be looked after, when you need to be as well.

Nicolas 13:35

Yeah, I was gonna say one thing that this university deserves credit for, is being more open to your views, regardless of what they are. I mean, I come from sixth form, I wouldn't say closed mind that's a bit of an exaggeration. But if you ever feeling stress or feeling mentally ill, ever feeling tired or sad or whatever. There's always like fliers near when you enter the university, like guidance in whatever you may be struggling with.

Frank 14:00

At school if there's a problem like that, it'd be 'you can go go speak to a counsellor.... next week'. Here, it's more there will be someone who will sit down and talk to you. They'll stop what they're doing, more or less, and have a nice chat with you. To quote a rugby player, James Haskell just recently, he said that your sexuality, your gender, your race... it should get to the point where it just doesn't, it doesn't matter, in the sense that it shouldn't matter if you're... if you're gay, bisexual, or asexual because you just ...you just are. People don't make a point of it, here. Everybody's just is just who they are. Yeah, there's no no fear of being yourself.

Academic Support 14:00

If you were to summarise some advice to somebody who'd come to you and said, 'I'm thinking of coming. I'm not sure I'd fit in or whatever'. What advice would you give them?

Nicolas 14:54

Well, I mean, the first thing is, don't worry about not fitting in, because literally anybody will fit in,

Frank 15:00

You don't have to worry about fitting in at this university.

Nicolas 15:03

I can't think of like a possible background in which you wouldn't be accepted. Honestly, just go to uni with open arms, and everybody will treat you the same.

Frank 15:13

Yeah, very much. So everybody's just themselves, you're here to have fun. It's a university where you here to create. And there's plenty of people that have done a few months of one course and then they've gone 'do you know what? I know someone on another course. I think might be better doing that'. You can switch and change and the university is often quite accommodating to that.

Academic Support 15:31

And finally, anything about academic work?

Frank 15:35

The way you learn and the way you work is more ... more independent in yourself, but ... and more collaborative, in that you have to work with other people. And that in itself is an entirely different style of learning. So, none of the work here is easy because you're working with other people who are brilliant but sometimes they have things and they can't turn up. I thought that, you know, studying from my A'levels and GCSE's were the most stressful times in my life. And then we just finished a project shooting eight films in the space of three weeks. And that has replaced it. It's a different type of...of work and learning, which just challenges you, especially if you come from an academic standpoint, just challenges you in ways that you haven't been challenged before, which is good and which is why you're here. You're not here to have a doddle, you're here to be challenged and to come through those challenges at the other end, a better and more educated person.

Academic Support 16:35

I think that's probably a brilliant time to stop. Thank you very, very much indeed for your contributions.

Nicolas and Frank 16:42

No problem.

Academic Support 16:43

Thank you.